Griffiths M-5 (ca. 1940) 1946 AW37 Kol AW37

[P. 217]

CHAPTER XI

MUSIC, SONGS, DANCE AND ART

The Kol people are passionately fond of music and song. It is not infrequent for them to sing, dance and beat the drum the whole night through. One of the reasons advanced for their living separate from Hindu villages is that it makes it possible for them to sing and play to their hearts' delight without being disturbed or disturbing anyone. The drums as played by the Kols beat with a particularly strident and penetrating note audible from long distances away. A real emotional release is connected with their music and the sense of rhythm felt throughout an evening with them can never be forgotten. The tones seem to pierce to the very marrow of one's being and make the body tingle. Great skill is required in playing the drum and for long periods the pace is kept up without a break. It takes practice, skill and strength to maintain this movement. 533 534 [154]

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS. The Kols make no use of wind instruments nor do they often use the stringed type, although the *sarangi*, a one-stringed instrument, is sometimes seen. They limit themselves to various types of instruments of percussion of which four kinds are chiefly employed by them: 534

1. *The Dholak.* The *dholak* is the favourite instrument of Kols and, in comparison with other types of percussion instruments, it is by far the most frequently used. It is cylindrical in shape and is constructed by a hollowing process from a solid block of wood. Each end is covered with skin stretched out by leathern thongs attached to the shell. The tightening or loosening of the thongs by adjusting a round block of wood under them serves to give the drum its desired pitch. A mixture of wood ash and boiled rice is often applied to the leather to give it more resonance. Both hands are used in playing it, the beats of the two hands usually differing, producing a syncopated beat of a nature difficult to imitate. The illustrations[1] show *dholaks* and the accompanying text figure makes their construction clear. The diameters of each [28 372]

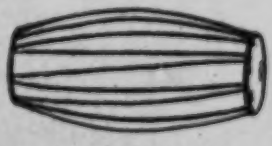

Fig. 22. The Dholak

1 See plate XVIII.